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ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR ITS FUNCTIONING

Implementation of decision 14/CP.1 on the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations and related administrative matters

Note by the Executive Secretary

Addendum

RELOCATION OF THE CONVENTION SECRETARIAT TO BONN AND POSSIBLE LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), at its second session held in Geneva from 27 February to 8 March 1996, adopted conclusions on arrangements for relocation of the Convention secretariat to Bonn, taking note of the information provided thereon in document FCCC/SBI/1996/7 (FCCC/SBI/1996/9, para. 66). Certain of these conclusions concerned the legal arrangements for the effective discharge of the functions of the Convention secretariat in the Federal Republic of Germany; these legal matters are dealt with in document FCCC/CP/1996/6/Add.1. On other matters, the conclusions of the SBI concerned:

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(a) The management of the common premises in Bonn (FCCC/SBI/1996/9, para. 66 (e));

(b) The transfer of the secretariat offices and the staff to Bonn (para. 66 (f));

(c) The offer of the Government of Germany to host the secretariat in Bonn (para. 66 (g)).

2. The SBI requested the Executive Secretary "to report to it at its third session on progress achieved on the above matters, so that it may make recommendations for appropriate action by the COP at its second session" (para. 66 (h)). It further requested the Executive Secretary "to report to it at its third session on practical arrangements for liaison with Parties during and after the relocation of the secretariat, including possible joint liaison arrangements with other secretariats in Geneva" (para. 66 (i)).

3. The present note provides further information on the non-legal matters covered by the SBI conclusions cited above.

4. After consideration of the information provided in the present note, the Conference may wish to request the Executive Secretary to report regularly to the SBI on these matters until the completion of the arrangements for the relocation of the Convention secretariat to Bonn and the fulfilment of the offer by the Government of Germany to host the Convention secretariat.

II. MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMON PREMISES IN BONN

5. The SBI, at its second session, "noted also that the Executive Secretary intends to conclude arrangements with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the management, use and servicing of the common United Nations premises in Bonn" (para. 66 (e)).

6. Discussions between the Executive Secretary, UNDP, and in particular the United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV), are continuing, to conclude a memorandum of understanding regarding the occupancy, use and maintenance of the premises and the sharing of the associated costs.

III. TRANSFER OF STAFF TO BONN

7. Also at its second session, the SBI "noted further that the relocation of the offices and the staff of the Convention secretariat will start in August 1996 and end later in the year; invited the Executive Secretary to promote conditions of service in Bonn consistent with the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules and that will help to maintain a critical mass of the existing secretariat team by encouraging experienced staff members of all categories and

linguistic backgrounds to relocate; and expressed the hope that the loss of staff and of productivity on account of relocation will be as short-lived as possible" (para. 66 (f)).

8. The Executive Secretary consulted all staff members of the secretariat to determine which of them were ready to take up positions with the secretariat in Bonn. Positive responses were given by some 60 per cent of the staff, while the remainder indicated that they would not be able to transfer to Bonn, for personal and family reasons. The relocation of the former will start with effect from 1 August 1996, and the separation of the latter from 31 July 1996; both processes will be completed by 31 December 1996.

9. The process of settling into a new working and living environment will divert energies from the regular work of the secretariat. The Executive Secretary and his colleagues will do everything possible to minimize the consequences of this diversion. Nevertheless, the process of adaptation will no doubt affect the productivity of the secretariat for the remainder of 1996.

IV. PRACTICAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE RELOCATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

10. The Convention secretariat, together with its counterpart, the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) has continued to arrange for the relocation of the secretariat to Bonn, as reported in document FCCC/SBI/1996/7. Those arrangements are proceeding successfully, and the secretariat will be able to move to Bonn in early August, as planned.

11. The relocation of the bulk of the secretariat will take place immediately after the second session of the Conference (COP 2), in the period 24 July to 9 August 1996. During this period the secretariat will suspend its normal activities and reduce its external relations to a minimum.

12. The Convention secretariat will be open for work in Bonn on 12 August 1996. It will take some time thereafter before the secretariat is able to operate at full capacity. The address of the Convention secretariat from that date on will be as follows:

Postal address: P.O. Box 260 124
D-53153 Bonn
Germany

Office location:	Haus Carstanjen Martin-Luther-King-Strasse 8 D-53175 Bonn
Telephone:	(49-228)815-1000 (plus direct dial for all staff)
Telefax:	(49-228)815-1999
E-mail:	secretariat@unfccc.de (plus direct e-mail for all staff)
World Wide Web home page	http://www.unfccc.de

13. Once the secretariat is established in Bonn, it will follow up outstanding elements contained in the offer made by the Government of Germany to host the Convention secretariat, notably concerning rent free office accommodation for least developed countries that have no representation in Bonn and access by the secretariat to libraries and other institutions which are equipped with sources of documentation in English.

V. LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS

A. Arrangements for liaison with Parties during and after the relocation of the Convention secretariat to Bonn

14. The SBI, at its second session requested the Executive Secretary "to report to it at its third session on practical arrangements for liaison with Parties during and after the relocation of the secretariat, including possible joint liaison arrangements with other secretariats in Geneva" (FCCC/SBI/1996/9, para. 66 (i)).

15. The Executive Secretary sent a circular letter dated 8 May 1996 to permanent missions of Parties requesting their feedback on this matter. The letter contained a request to designate a point or points of liaison for the period August to December 1996, and the year 1997, taking into account, *inter alia*, the location of their diplomatic mission in Germany and the availability of a permanent mission in Geneva or in New York. After this initial period, the designation of liaison points will be reviewed in the light of the experience gained.

16. The Executive Secretary further expressed his wish to receive that information no later than 7 June 1996. As of 2 July 1996, 36 Parties had designated their point of liaison with the secretariat after its relocation to Bonn. The number of replies does not yet allow the secretariat to reach a final conclusion regarding liaison arrangements. Consequently, the Executive Secretary would like to remind those Parties that have not yet done so to provide

such information at the earliest opportunity, so as to allow the Executive Secretary to put in place a system for communication between Parties and the Convention secretariat in Bonn.

17. With regard to arrangements for liaison in Geneva, possibly in cooperation with other secretariats, in the same circular letter the Executive Secretary informed Parties that "consultations with relevant secretariats are being undertaken to explore the possibility to maintain some liaison capacity in Geneva, at least until the end of 1997". This liaison capacity would enable Parties that so prefer to continue to cover the Convention from their Geneva missions and would also facilitate interaction by the secretariat with Geneva-based programmes and activities related to climate change.

18. Until further information is available on the needs of Parties in this connection, the Executive Secretary is arranging for the maintenance of contact with Geneva missions through the interim secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. There will be no additional budgetary implications. (See document FCCC/CP/1996/7, para. 36.)

B. Establishment and maintenance of a network of national focal points

19. The Convention budget for the 1996-1997 biennium includes provisions within the intergovernmental and institutional support programme of the secretariat for the establishment and maintenance of a network of national focal points for the Convention (FCCC/CP/1995/5/Add.2, para. 47 (b), and decision 17/CP.1).

20. The SBI, at its second session, invited Parties not included in Annex I "to nominate national focal points for facilitating assistance for the preparation of initial communications" (FCCC/SBI/1996/9, para. 29).

21. Furthermore, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, at its second session, "invited Parties to identify the relevant governmental authority/ministry authorized to accept, approve or endorse activities implemented jointly and to report them to the COP through the secretariat" (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/8, para. 74).

22. Consequently, the Convention secretariat has started to develop a network of national focal points for activities relating to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

23. In this context, the Executive Secretary, in the above-mentioned circular letter of 8 May, also requested Parties to inform the secretariat of the respective government authority formally designated to act as the national focal point(s) for the Convention. He pointed out that, bearing in mind that the first national communications from Parties not included in

Annex I to the Convention fall due as from March 1997, nominations for national focal point(s) should be received by the end of July 1996.

24. By 2 July 1996, the secretariat had received 36 replies. Furthermore, seven Parties have designated official contact points for matters concerning activities implemented jointly (see FCCC/CP/1996/14, annex I).

25. The list of focal points and their addresses will be included in the publication entitled *Who-is-Who in the UNFCCC Process - Directory of Representatives and Observers at the sessions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1995-1996* that is being prepared by CC:INFO, and will be mailed later in 1996 to each registered participant at COP 2.